

South Ayrshire Council

Report by Director of Strategic Change and Communities
to Cabinet
of 15 February 2023

Subject: Definition of Islamophobia

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for South Ayrshire Council to adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) definition of Islamophobia.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet agrees that the Council adopts the All-Party Parliamentary Group definition of Islamophobia.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In April 2018, the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims conducted an inquiry to develop a working definition of Islamophobia. This involved listening to, understanding and taking on board views across the spectrum: from the Muslim Council of Britain and the Federation of Student Islamic Societies, to The Network of Sikh Organisations and The National Secular Society. Academics, community representatives, legal professionals and politicians at different levels of government all came together to assist in the formation of a definition of Islamophobia that was not only useful and accurately defined the type of racism Muslims and those who are perceived to be Muslim face, but also, crucially, to ensure that this had the trust of the very communities it was designed to support.
- 3.2 The group agreed a working definition of Islamophobia that notes '**Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.**' (APPG 2017) This definition is endorsed by all political parties in the Scottish Parliament and adopted by the Liberal Democrats, UK Labour, Plaid Cymru, SNP Westminster Group and the Muslim Council of Britain.
- 3.3 In April 2018 the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Tackling Islamophobia was established, bringing together politicians from all parties and beginning an inquiry into the issue of Islamophobia in Scotland.
- 3.4 The inquiry report: 'Scotland's Islamophobia' was prepared by Peter Hopkins from the University of Newcastle and supports the use of the APPG definition.
- 3.5 Further background on the development of this definition can found in the background papers section of this report.

- 3.6 In June 2022, a motion was agreed by Council requesting officers to bring a report to Cabinet giving further background to the APPG definition, setting out the steps the Council would require to take if it adopts the definition and any associated costs of doing so.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approves the adoption of the following working definition of Islamophobia:

'Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.'
(APPG 2017).

- 4.2 Adopting this definition does not require specific steps to be taken or incur direct costs. However, officers will source appropriate training (from existing budgets) that will be made available to all staff through the usual channels.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are consistent with legal requirements and reflect appropriate advice.

- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Additional training will be sourced from existing budgets.

7. Human Resources Implications

- 7.1 Not applicable

8. Risk

8.1 Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations

- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

8.2 Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations

- 8.2.1 Rejecting the recommendations may impact on the reputation of the Council

9. Equalities

- 9.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment Scoping process. There are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations and therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as [Appendix 1](#).

10. Sustainable Development Implications

- 10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11. Options Appraisal

- 11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12. Link to Council Plan

- 12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Commitment 1 of the Council Plan: Fair and Effective Leadership/ Leadership that promotes fairness.

13. Results of Consultation

- 13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.
- 13.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Lee Lyons, Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

14. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

- 14.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Strategic Change and Communities will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

<i>Implementation</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Managed by</i>
Source appropriate training on Islamophobia	August 2023	Service Lead – Policy, Performance and Community Planning

Background Papers [South Ayrshire Council – 29 June 2022 – Notice of Motion \(1\)](#)

[Islamophobia Defined - The inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia](#) (All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims)

[Scotland's Islamophobia - Report of the inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland by the Cross-Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia](#)

Person to Contact Kevin Anderson, Service Lead – Policy, Performance and Community Planning
County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr
Phone 01292 612982
E-mail kevin.anderson@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

Date: 6 February 2023

South Ayrshire Council
Equality Impact Assessment including Fairer Scotland Duty

Section One: Policy Details*

Name of Policy	Definition of Islamophobia
Lead Officer (Name/Position)	Kevin Anderson
Support Team (Names/Positions) including Critical Friend	Susan McCardie

*The term Policy is used throughout the assessment to embrace the full range of policies, procedures, strategies, projects, applications for funding or financial decisions.

What are the main aims of the policy?	To agree to adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia
What are the intended outcomes of the policy?	Adoption of the definition as per a motion to Council.

Section Two: What are the Likely Impacts of the Policy?

Will the policy impact upon the whole population of South Ayrshire and/or particular groups within the population? (please specify)	Adopting this policy will have a positive impact on expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Considering the following Protected Characteristics and themes, what likely impacts or issues does the policy have for the group or community?

List any likely positive and/or negative impacts.

Protected Characteristics	Positive and/or Negative Impacts
Age: Issues relating to different age groups e.g. older people or children and young people	None

Disability: Issues relating to disabled people	None
Gender Reassignment – Trans/Transgender: Issues relating to people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex	None
Marriage and Civil Partnership: Issues relating to people who are married or are in a civil partnership	None
Pregnancy and Maternity: Issues relating to woman who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave	None
Race: Issues relating to people from different racial groups,(BME) ethnic minorities, including Gypsy/Travellers	None
Religion or Belief: Issues relating to a person's religion or belief (including non-belief)	<p>Adopting the definition gives to better understanding about the issue and allow for meaningful strategies to be devised to tackle it. For instance, undergoing and delivering awareness training.</p> <p>The definition addresses forms of Islamophobia beyond physical and verbal abuse, currently governed by existing hate crime legislation. 'Perceived muslimness' highlights the racialisation and intersectionality of Islamophobia, an issue which affects non-Muslim communities such as Sikhs because of harmful stereotype</p>
Sex: Issues specific to women and men/or girls and boys	None
Sexual Orientation: Issues relating to a person's sexual orientation i.e. LGBT+, heterosexual/straight	None

Equality and Diversity Themes Relevant to South Ayrshire Council	Positive and/or Negative Impacts
Health Issues and impacts affecting people's health	None
Human Rights: Issues and impacts affecting people's human rights such as being treated with dignity and respect, the right to education, the right to respect for private and family life, and the right to free elections.	Positive impacts on people's rights to be treated with dignity and respect.

Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Positive and/or Negative Impacts
Low Income/Income Poverty: Issues: cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food and clothing.	none
Low and/or no wealth: Issues: enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future	none
Material Deprivation: Issues: being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure/hobbies	none
Area Deprivation: Issues: where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of transport)	none

Section Three: Evidence Used in Developing the Policy

<p>Involvement and Consultation In assessing the impact(s) set out above what evidence has been collected from involvement, engagement or consultation? Who did you involve, when and how?</p>	Engagement was carried out as part of the inquiry including an online survey inviting submissions of written evidence.
<p>Data and Research In assessing the impact set out above what evidence has been collected from research or other data. Please specify what research was carried out or data collected, when and how this was done.</p>	The Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Tackling Islamophobia organised an inquiry into the issue of Islamophobia in Scotland. This is detailed in the report of the inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland published by the Scottish Parliament
<p>Partners data and research In assessing the impact(s) set out in Section 2 what evidence has been provided by partners? Please specify partners</p>	As above
<p>Gaps and Uncertainties Have you identified any gaps or uncertainties in your understanding of the issues or impacts that need to be explored further?</p>	None

Section Four: Detailed Action Plan to address identified gaps in:

- a) evidence and**
- b) to mitigate negative impacts**

No.	Action	Responsible Officer(s)	Timescale
1	N/A		
2			
3			
4			

Note: Please add more rows as required.

Section Five - Performance monitoring and reporting

Considering the policy as a whole, including its equality and diversity implications:

When is the policy intended to come into effect?	Upon approval by Cabinet – February 2023
When will the policy be reviewed?	As required
Which Panel will have oversight of the policy?	Cabinet

Summary Equality Impact Assessment Implications & Mitigating Actions

Name of Policy:

This policy will assist or inhibit the Council’s ability to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations as follows:

<p>Eliminate discrimination</p> <p>Provide a shared understanding of Islamophobia</p>
<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>
<p>Foster good relations</p> <p>Provide a shared understanding of Islamophobia</p>
<p>Consider Socio-Economic Disadvantage (Fairer Scotland Duty)</p>

Summary of Key Action to Mitigate Negative Impacts	
Actions	Timescale

Signed: ...Kevin Anderson.....**Service Lead**

Date: 11/1/23.....